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cation is based upon minor characteristics of the plants. I collected the following 24 names of supposed taro varieties:

Taro-vaihi, vaihi-iti, ketu-anga-mea, hore-hore-tapatea, tua-koiro, pia nguku-haha-tea, ngeti-tea-tea, ngaatu, hara-hara, tea-tea, koro-maruu, mango, taro-ketu-turi, kape Rapanui, taro-ngeti-uriuri. The *hiva taro* (foreign taro) is subdivided into *taro-uriuri* and *taro-teatea.* The commonest form is the *hara-hara.*

Arum, *kape* (*Alocasia macrorrhiza*) is mentioned in the creation chant collected by Thomson (p. 321): "Acridness copulating with Bad Taste produced the Kape." The name of this species, which is akin to taro, was given to me in the list of taro names. It was probably introduced on the island in early time and is still cultivated.

Yam

Yams, *uhi* (*Dioscorea* sp.), have ceased to be cultivated, though some still grow wild on the inner side of the crater of *Rano-kao.* The natives seem to have held them in higher esteem in olden times, for all of the travelers of the eighteenth century allude to them as one of the principal staple foods of the natives. Today the islanders think yams tasteless, and during my whole stay I was offered them only once. Martinez (151, p. 37) lists the following 41 yam names:

Pua-rau-oho-uri, pua-rau-oho-tea, pua-tiveka, pua-aru-aru, pua-rona, pua-vahi, eihe, ihe-matao-raha, ihe-mutu-po, nahe, nahe-mataa-toka, nahe-rehe-rehe, ravi, ravi-uri, ravi-tea, ravi-a-kurakura, tea-ho-popo, tea-makuna, tea-nuhi, veri-aka-tau, moko-haha-tea, veri-pupuru, rua-papa, tuke ipuakere, tuke taro kura, tupere-uri, tupere-tea, moko-iku-keu, papake-tea, apuku eu, kunekune, pa, erere, kukuru toua, mine, papake-uri, papake-kahu-kahu, anaukaho, ravei, ravei mangamanga, ravei paka, ekoka rua ravei.

Yams were planted in carefully made mounds of earth. Overgrown yams which become hard are called *kane.* Tubers eaten by worms are said to be *momo.*

Ti

The ti (*Cordyline fruticosa*) is mentioned for the first time by Palmer (171, p. 170) in 1868. He writes that the plant "is pretty plentiful, but is put to no other use than for wattling of the grass houses and as javeline shafts." The ti has become extremely rare. I saw only a few plants, growing wild near La Pérouse Bay; there are, or were, specimens in Rano-kao. Charred ti leaves supplied the black powder (*ngarahu*) which was used for tattooing.

Sugar Cane

Sugar cane, *toa (Saccharum officinarum),* is first referred to by Roggeveen (186, p. 13), who lists it among the products brought to him in great quantities. The sugar-cane stalks which G. Forster (83, vol. 1, p. 571) noticed near a house "were about nine or ten feet high, even in this parched country, and

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contained a very sweet juice which the inhabitants presented to us very frequently, and particularly whenever we asked for something to drink." Only fifty years ago the natives quenched their thirst during their journeys with sugar cane. Even more recently uncultivated sugar cane has been found on several parts of the island. The juice was used as an ointment or as an adhesive upon which pigments were stuck in face painting, and the leaves served as hut coverings. Sugar cane was consumed in great quantities during the feasts. The name for a fragment of sugar cane planted in the soil is *pupura*.

Bananas

All early travelers (186, p. 13; 90, p. 101; 53, vol. 1, p. 288) mention bananas, *maika* (*Musa sapientum*), as products offered by the islanders for trade. They were extensively cultivated, for some Spaniards under Gonzalez (90, p. 123) visited a plantation near Vinapu "which stretched about a quarter of a league in extent, and was about half that distance in breadth." Lisiansky (143, p. 86) noticed that "every house was planted round with bananas and sugar cane."

The trees in these plantations were disposed "in the order called quincunx" (130, vol. 2, p. 259) and "planted in straight lines by the cord" (130, vol. 1, p. 76). According to G. Forster (83, vol. 1, p. 571), who went through some plantations near the present Hanga-roa, "the bananas were all growing in holes one foot deep, which were supposed to be contrived for collecting rain, and preserving it for a longer time about the plant." A century later, Thomson (215, p. 456) states that "bananas are grown in holes a foot or more deep and with sloping sides, designed to catch and hold the rain water as long as possible about the roots of the plant." Whenever it was possible natural cavities were utilized, in which decayed branches and leaves made a thick layer of fertile humus. The richest banana plantations of today are located on the west coast near the leper house and the ancient village of Ana-o-hoka, between ahu Akapu and Ahu-te-peu. There, in some places the lava crust which covered enormous subterranean cavities has sunk, forming holes about 10 to 15 feet deep. Trees planted there in former days thrived on a rich, damp soil, protected from the sea winds.

At present the natives count ten varieties of bananas, some of which have recently come from Tahiti: *maika-pukapuka, maika-korotea, maika-hihi, maika-pia, maika-naho-a, maika-pahu* (today extinct), *maika-puru-ino, maika-riu, maika-perora, maika-hiva* (a foreign variety), and *maika-tamoa* (introduced from Samoa). The fruit is still an important staple food of the Easter Islanders. In the past it must have been even more important. The shoots of banana used for planting were called *huri*.

Dried banana leaves (*kaka*) were once used as house coverings and the

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248 are generally not very extensive and their number and size seem to corroborate Cook's statement (53, vol. 1, p. 291) that the natives had difficulty in getting raw material for their clothes. La Pérouse (130, vol. 1, p. 73) was impressed by the scarcity of the *mahute*: "These trees are very rare, having been destroyed by the droughts. Such as have survived are only three feet high, and these they have been obliged to encompass with walls to secure them from the winds: it is remarkable that the height of these trees never exceeded that of the walls by which they are sheltered."

G. Forster (83, vol. 1, p. 568) describes a mulberry tree plantation: "Being arrived at the shrubbery which we had in view, we found it was nothing but a small plantation of paper mulberry, of which here, as well as at Teheitee, they make their cloth. Its stems were from two to four feet high, and planted in rows, among very large rocks, where the rain had washed a little soil together."

The expedition sent by Cook (53, vol. 1, p. 285) to explore the south coast "saw in several places the Otaheitian cloth plant; but it was poor and weak, and not above two and a half feet high at most."

Today the *mahute* is found only in the interior of the crater of Rano-kao, where, at about the time of La Pérouse (130, vol. 1, p. 81), "the marsh was surrounded by finest plantations of bananas and mulberry trees." They still grow well on the northern slope among big stones.

Turmeric

249 Turmeric, *pua* (*Curcuma longa*), grows sparsely in the bottom of the crater of Rano-kao. The Spaniards who went round the island in 1770 saw in the plantations "a root which they chew and daub their body and limbs all over with; it is good for yielding a fine yellow dye" (90, p. 123). The natives esteemed both the dye and the perfume of the plant, for the native name means fragrance.

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Arrowroot

244 Arrowroot, *pia* (*Tacca pinnatifida*), was described to me by the islanders. According to them, it resembled *pua*, with the sole exception that the *pia* root was white. The rhizomes of *pua* and *pia* are quite unlike. In ancient times it was eaten after it had been baked either upon or in the oven. Arrowroot yielded a dye which was made from the starch by the same method as that used for the *pua*. Knoche (123, p. 120) and Brown (27, p. 39) both identify the plant as the wild arrowroot.

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The word *pia* appears in an old chant collected by Thomson (215, p. 520), in which are described genealogically the origins of plants and other elements of nature. If Thomson's text were entirely reliable, it would prove beyond any doubt that arrowroot was known to Easter Islanders before contact with